

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in this application.

1-5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence encoding:

(a) a peptide immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) VCA-p18 or VCA-p40 proteins, comprising ~~an immunoreactive fragment~~an epitope of the VCA-p18 or VCA-p40 protein, encoded within the EBV open reading frames BFRF3 and BdRF1, respectively, or

(b) a functional variant of said peptide described in (a), wherein said variant is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) VCA-p18 or VCA-p40 proteins.

7. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO.: 1 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes an Epstein-Barr Virus peptide comprising an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein.

8. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO.: 3 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes an Epstein-Barr Virus peptide comprising an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p40 protein.

9. (Previously presented) A vector molecule comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to claim 6.

10-25. (Canceled).

26. (Previously presented) A vector molecule comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to Claim 7.

27. (Previously presented) A vector molecule comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to Claim 8.

28-31. (Canceled).

32. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes a ~~peptide comprising at least 12~~ contiguous amino acids of an Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein and wherein said ~~peptide comprises~~ 12 contiguous amino acids comprise an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein.

33. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes a ~~peptide comprising at least 12~~ contiguous amino acids of an Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p40 protein and wherein said ~~peptide comprises~~ 12 contiguous amino acids comprise an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p40 protein.

34. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes an Epstein-Barr Virus peptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 or SEQ ID NO:6 or a combination of both,

wherein said peptide is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein.